

Life Skills Social Competency Training

Critical school competencies consist of both basic academic skills and academic survival skills. We acknowledge the very important role that good academic skills-reading, writing, arithmetic and so forth play in the happiness and success of citizens.

Life Skills Training

Life skills training program emphasize the acquisition of generic social and cognitive skills. The theoretical foundation of these approaches consists primarily of Bandura's (1977) social learning theory and Jessor and Jessor's (1977) problem behavior theory. From these perspectives, deviant behaviors are seen as socially learned, functional behaviors that result from the interplay of personal and environmental factors.

Training Model

Alike teaching any other skills, the overall task is broken down into small stages, which are taught systematically, step by step, from simple to complex. Training in each session uses a five-step model:

1. Instruction (teach)
2. Modeling (show)
3. Role-playing (practice)
4. Feedback (reinforce)
5. Homework (apply)

Specific tasks are presented in sequence, and frequent rewards are given for desired behavior. All five training steps are important in teaching specific skills:

1. Teach. Explanation and instructions are provided
2. Show. Specific skill is modeled for student with videotape, trainer or another child.
3. Practice. Child is encouraged to imitate and use skill with role-playing.
4. Reinforce. After role-plays, feedback and encouragement is given.
5. Apply. Students are requested to perform the newly acquired skill in various real-life situations. Students record and report back to next session.

To be most effective, these skills programs should start early in a child's life, such as preschool and reinforce throughout the young person's school career.